

**REMARKS**

Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

**Status of the Application**

Claims 1-18 are pending. Claims 1-3 have been amended for clarification and to incorporate into claim 1 limitations of allowed claim 3 and its intervening claim 2. Claims 5, 14, 17, and 18 have been amended so that the claims uniformly refer to the mini sheet piece as a “restriction mini sheet piece.” No new matter is added.

**Allowable Subject Matter**

Claims 3-5, 14, and 16-18 have been found to be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. The Examiner’s position is that the interlabial pad having a mini sheet piece for restricting spreading of an inflection portion is not taught or suggested by the prior art of record.

**Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102 and 103**

Claims 1, 2, 6-8, and 11-13 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Johnson et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,595,392). Claims 9 and 10 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Johnson. Claim 15 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Johnson in view of Farris et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,131,736).

As amended, claim 1 reads as follows:

Claim 1: An interlabial pad adapted to be inserted between the labia of a female wearer, comprising:

a water permeable surface side sheet facing a body side;

a water permeable or impermeable back side sheet facing a garment side, bonded to the water permeable surface side sheet so as to enclose an absorbent body for absorbing body fluid;

a long convex area formed by at least an inflection portion provided along a longitudinal direction of said surface side sheet so that a substantial center part of said surface side sheet in a lateral direction becomes an apex towards the body side;

an extended area formed by being extended from a bottom of said long convex area in the lateral direction of said surface side sheet; and  
a restriction mini sheet piece for restricting spreading of the inflection portion.

Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the limitations from claim 2 that the long convex area is formed by at least an inflection portion, and from claim 3 that the interlabial pad includes a restriction mini sheet piece for restricting spreading of the inflection portion. The prior art of record does not teach or suggest the interlabial pad of claim 1 having a restriction mini sheet piece for restricting spreading of the inflection portion. Claim 3 has been found, for this reason, to be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Therefore, Applicants submit that claim 1 is novel over the prior art of record and allowable. The remaining claims depend directly or indirectly from claim 1 and are allowable for at least the same reason. Applicants respectfully request that the rejections be withdrawn.

### CONCLUSION

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicants believe the pending application is in condition for allowance. If there are any remaining issues which the Examiner believes could be resolved through either a Supplemental Response or an Examiner's Amendment, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number given below.

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Respectfully submitted,

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